

# Article Alert

No. 02, February 2006

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## Information Resource Center

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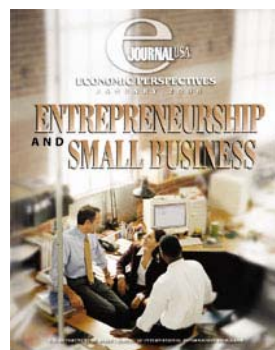
## mailing label

The books, articles, and web sites described in the Article Alert present a diversity of views in order to keep our IRC users abreast of current issues and concerns in the United States. These items represent the views and opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect official U.S. Government policy.

## New E-Journal

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### Entrepreneurship and Small Business



Successful small businesses are critical to maintaining a robust U.S. economy. The numbers almost speak for themselves:

- 99 percent of all American businesses are small;
- small businesses provide approximately 75 percent of the net new jobs added to the U.S. economy every year;
- small businesses represent 99.7 percent of all employers;

- small businesses employ 50.1 percent of the private workforce;
- small businesses provide 40.9 percent of private sales in the country.

Together these groups are educating interested Americans about entrepreneurship. They are offering classes on how to hire employees, negotiate contracts, and market products.

- How Small Businesses Contribute to U.S. Economic Expansion
- Small Business in U.S. History
- Government's Role in Encouraging Small Business
- American Bankruptcy Laws: Encouraging Risk-Taking and Entrepreneurship
- So You Want to Start Your Own Small Business
- Small Businesses at Work (January 2006)

## New Publication

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Essays by government, academic, and industry experts introduce intellectual property rights issues and key concepts -- patents, trademarks, copy-rights, trade secrets, and new forms of IP. Articles also explain why countries need effective intellectual property systems, and what governments in each region are doing to enforce IPR. Includes a glossary of IP terms, a list of print and Internet IP resources,

and a separate resource list for children and young adults. (January 2006)

#### I. INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

#### II. LAWS IN EVOLUTION

#### III. ISSUES BY INDUSTRY

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## DEMOCRACY & HUMAN RIGHTS

1. Dionne, Jr., E. J. "Why the Culture War is the Wrong War." *Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 297, no. 1, January/February 2006, pp. 130-135

Syndicated columnist E. J. Dionne suggests positively that debates surrounding culture wars can be used to present ideal visions or fierce criticisms of the United States. Dionne, citing election exit polls, claims the country is not as polarized on important issues as journalists and political activists might contend. The real division in the nation, Dionne writes, is between those who want to have a culture war and those who don't. At election time, for example, politicians are either rallying the base or appealing to the center, preempting any real discussion of what "ails" American culture and society. Dionne says that Americans would be better off trying to find common ground by challenging the culture-war metaphor and, in the process, deflating the partisan posturing of liberals and conservatives.

2. O'Connell, Kim. "Most Valuable Player: Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin Combines 1960s-Style Populism With 21st-Century Business Savvy." *American City & County*, vol. 120, no. 13, December 2005, pp. 22-28

Shirley Franklin, the first African-American woman to lead a major Southern city (Atlanta, Georgia), came into office on the heels of a predecessor whose term ended in political and financial scandal and an \$82 million budget deficit. To restore public trust in city government, she instituted an ethics code for all municipal employees and reduced funding for bloated programs, while reinvesting in understaffed and underfunded areas. The author notes that "she's not afraid of telling people what they don't want to hear"; Franklin declared herself the "sewer mayor" to deal with Atlanta's century-old sewer system. Franklin's second-term agenda centers on education, eradicating homelessness, economic development, and reminding friends and foes alike that "sometimes what we need is the flexibility to give people what they need."

## ECONOMIC SECURITY AND TRADE

3. Singham, Shanker; Hrinak, Donna. "Poverty and Globalization." *National Interest*, no. 82, Winter 2005/06, pp. 117-122

Poverty, often cast as the fault of multinational corporations or "imperialist" governments, is the most virulent killer on the planet, say the authors. Trade "liberalization" has not lived up to its promise to relieve poverty, primarily because the liberalization reforms have not been accompanied by the domestic economic reforms required to create a true competitive market, they explain. Additionally, trade negotiations are conducted with a strong bias toward producers rather than consumers. As long as producers' interests continue to trump those of consumers and elites protect their own interests, say the authors, true competition cannot take place and poverty will continue to lead its victims toward the false promises of radical leaders. They propose that trade negotiators should adopt a stronger stance in favor of consumer welfare by finding ways to link the level of competition in markets to the liberalization processes. For example, they note, trade agreements that reward internal reforms which support competitive markets will lead to the economic growth that alleviates poverty and desperation.

4. Parfit, Michael. "After Oil: Powering the Future." *National Geographic*, vol. 208, no. 2, August 2005, pp. 2-31

The author notes in this cover story that, as global demand for energy keeps increasing and a plateau in global oil production is expected to occur in the years to come, there will be no "silver bullet" that will solve humanity's growing energy needs. Some experts believe that "this pursuit is even more important than the war on terrorism." Parfit describes various programs to develop renewable technologies such as biomass, wind and solar, as well as conservation efforts and conventional technologies such as nuclear power and coal, as a bridge to a new "energy future" as supplies of oil begin to wane later in this century.



## African American History Month

In honor of African American History Month, 2006, the U.S. Post Office will recognize Actress Hattie McDaniel as the 29th inductee into the Black Heritage stamp series. (U.S. Post Office)

Available online at: <http://usinfo.state.gov>

## GLOBAL ISSUES

5. Robertson, Lori. "Adding A Price Tag." *American Journalism Review*, vol. 27, no. 6, December 2005/January 2006, pp. 52-57

The New York Times last year created a controversy when it began charging a fee for readers' online access to some of its top opinion columnists as well as to the Times' article archives. The paper was bucking the widespread presumption that web information should be free. At the same time, a number of big media companies are busily acquiring popular Internet sites, some of which the companies offer at no cost. Driving the fee controversy is a not-so-simple question: can newspapers stay in business if they give their work away? In this article, media publishers, marketing managers, and advertisers weigh in on the pros and cons of fee-based content and where it's headed. Although policies on paid content are in flux, the question inevitably will assume growing importance to media owners and readers in the future.

6. Talbot, David. "The Internet Is Broken." *Technology Review*, vol. 108, no. 11, December 2005/January 2006, pg. 62-69

The Internet's fundamental flaws -- its lack of security, decreased ability to accommodate new technologies, and that it is hard to manage -- cost companies billions, impede innovation, and threaten national security. It's time for a clean-slate approach, says MIT's David Clark. Nearly 1 billion people use the Internet and critical industries like banking increasingly rely on it. But the originally simple communications technology has become a complex patchwork of plugs and workarounds; it's difficult to manage and increasingly fragile. Clark says it's time to rethink the Internet's basic architecture -- to potentially start over with a new design that involves putting existing pieces together in a different way. The article describes Clark's specific recommendations for a future design.

## INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

7. Haas, Richard N. "The Politics of Power: New Forces and New Challenges." *Harvard International Review*, vol. 27, no. 2, Summer 2005, pp. 60-65

In this interview with Richard Haas, President of the Council on Foreign Relations, the politics of power is discussed. According to Haas, there are several types of power, including, military, economic, diplomatic and cultural. No matter what type of power is involved, though, it should not be confused with influence. Haas points out that the various forms of power are also interdependent; nation-states no longer have a monopoly on power. There are also many other non-state actors in the power arena today, such as NGOs and international organizations. Haas feels the goal of U.S. foreign policy should be to mobilize international cooperation in tackling global problems.

8. Evans, Alexander. "Understanding Madrasahs." *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 85, no. 1, January/February 2006

The author, an official with the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, notes that madrasahs, the religious schools that provide education to millions of Muslim students, have been blamed for a variety of ills in the Islamic world, and have been repeatedly stereotyped in the Western media as training camps for radicals. Evans points out that only a few dozen madrasahs in Pakistan have been found to fit this description. The vast majority of madrasahs provide a vital social service -- education and lodging, offering what is often the only path out of poverty and illiteracy for rural children, who might otherwise find themselves victims of forced labor and sex trafficking. Evans believes that Western policymakers should look on the madrasah system as an opportunity, not a threat, and that there is a low-key debate about reform taking place in many madrasahs. He argues that they "offer an important arena for public diplomacy - a chance to ensure that the Muslim leaders of tomorrow do not see the West as an enemy inherently hostile to all Muslim institutions."

## U.S. SOCIETY AND VALUES

9. Mandelbaum, Michael. "Why the Rest of the World Secretly Loves America." *Foreign Policy*, No. 152, January/February 2006

The author, professor of American foreign policy at The Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, notes that "the rest of the world complains that American hegemony is reckless, arrogant and insensitive ... [but] the world's guilty secret is that it enjoys the security and stability the U.S. provides." Mandelbaum notes that, historically, other nations have banded together to provide a check on world powers, yet no such anti-American alignment is taking place. Unlike past empires, U.S. overseas interventions have been few in number, and generally have not been undertaken with the idea of complete control. Because of America's open political system, any country is able to gain access to Congressional committees with oversight over international relations and foreign policy. In that sense, the U.S. government has become a world government, and has in effect become a mediator over regional conflicts. He also notes that the U.S. taxpaying public is bearing the expense of maintaining a military that ensures the free flow of international trade, even for those countries hostile to the U.S. If anything can safely be said about much of the world's attitude toward the U.S., notes Mandelbaum, it is that "they will continue to criticize it, and they will miss it when it is gone."

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